



## SUCCESS STORY

### Village Builds Toward Better Health

#### Community uses grant for improving access to clinic and information

Trevor Lake was volunteering with the Peace Corps in the town of Chirpan when its mayor approached him about the need for better health care in another part of the municipality, the village of Gita.



Photo: Peace Corps/Trevor Lake

Pupils in the village of Gita discover that learning about their health can be fun as part of a USAID-supported effort to improve local health care.

***"I will always be encouraged when I think about how a struggling village community managed to improve their quality of life by joint efforts from local educators, community officials, the municipality, Peace Corps, and USAID," said volunteer Trevor Lake.***

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Among the mayor's concerns was the condition of the Gita Medical Center, which serves the 976 residents of the villages of Gita, Oslarka and Durshava.

Trevor worked with Bulgarian colleagues to develop a strategy for improved health care and structural stability of the area's clinic, and applied for a USAID small project assistance grant, which they received. In order to spread basic knowledge to promote healthier lives within the communities, the project team had the idea to offer health

classes for the community's children and adults. The team worked closely with the medical center's director, who offered to teach classes about various health issues, including sexuality and the dangers of drugs, tobacco and alcohol. These classes took place roughly every two months.

Another issue to address was the overall physical condition of the center itself. Fixing the roof was vital for the center to maintain its function as a safe and effective health clinic for the surrounding village residents, most of whom have no access to basic transportation and are unable to travel nine kilometers (about six miles) to the nearest hospital. With USAID funding, the clinic roof was repaired. It is now structurally sound and ready for many harsh Bulgarian winters to come. The medical center also was stocked with health information brochures on issues ranging from sexually transmitted diseases to basic first aid.